

TRINITY CHARGE--THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Ralph C. Link, Pastor
Christ Church, Duncannon 9:00 A.M.
Trinity Church, New Bloomfield 10:30 A.M.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP April 9, 1972

The Organ Prelude
*The Hymn of Praise 21
*The Call to Worship
*The Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Almighty God, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, grant us grace to believe in his victory and faith and to make it our own. Help us in the days of our flesh to be more ready to minister like Christ than to be ministered to; give us a ready heart to bear the heavy burdens of others; keep our tempers cool and our spirits calm; make us brave to fight for right and to stand firm against those who would oppress the weak; cause us in all our ways to say with him, "Not my will, but thine be done." Give us grace to know him as our living Lord and strength to follow in his footsteps; in his name we pray. Amen.

*The Kyrie
*The Assurance of Pardon
The Scripture----Matthew 20:29-34
Luke 24:13-31

*The Gloria Patri
The Anthem (Trinity)
The Pastoral Prayer
The Announcements
The Receiving of Tithes and Offerings
*The Doxology
*The Offering Prayer and Lord's Prayer
The Hymn of Meditation 242
The Sermon----"Do You See?"
The Sermon Prayer

*The Benediction
*The Threefold Amen
*The Postlude

*Congregation Stands

CHRIST CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Heidelberg Class will meet Tues. evening
April 11th at 7:30 PM.

Win-A-Chum Class will meet Tues. April 11th
at 7:30 PM in the home of Rita Stoner.
Claire Steele will be the worship leader.

Missionary Circle Meeting is Tues. April
11th at 7:30 PM at the home of Mabel Gelbach.

TRINITY CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Donations are being solicited for the family of Miles Page. Their home burned completely this past week and they were unable to save anything. A receptacle has been placed on the table in the back of the church if you wish to contribute. A relief fund has been started by the New Bloomfield Fire Company. This family consists of four children, 3 boys 13, 7, and 4. One girl age 9. The only thing they have now is what they are wearing.

RELIEF FUND AT COMM-WEALTH BANK, MAY GIVE THERE.

QUESTIUNNAIRES? IN BACK OF CHURCH

RICHARD FOX IN HARRISBURG H.A.J.

RONALD LEYDEN H. SP. ?

"Do You See?"

MATT.

Text: ~~Luke~~ Matthew 20; 33 "Lord, let us have our sight back."

Luke 24:31a "And their eyes were opened and they recognized him."

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Have you ever been associated with a person who was blind? Perhaps you have been able to observe someone who was blind if you have not had the opportunity to associate with a blind individual. I have been associated with several blind people and have had the occasion to observe others who were blind. It is an amazing thing to observe ~~blind people and~~ how blind people are able to overcome their handicap. They, for the most part have sharpened and honed their other senses to make up for the lack of sight.

To be able to live in a world of darkness, while all around you may be heard and felt the sounds of normal life, must be frustrating indeed. But to most of these people, they accept the fact of permanent darkness with a sense of ease. To be sure, not all blind people react this way. But for the most part they are able to overcome a goodly portion of their problem through attuning themselves to their environment.

TODAY WE ARE CONCERNED WITH SEVERAL BLIND PEOPLE. WE READ OF
IN OUR SCRIPTURE ~~If you have had the occasion to observe~~ The fame of

Jesus probably had spread like wildfire, throughout all of Palestine. People were probably all talking about this preacher, who could heal the sick, raise the dead and forgive people their sins. By word of mouth his fame must have spread and so in every town and village through which he passed, the people were on hand to greet him. Some came merely out of curiosity and some came because they wanted something or needed something. And so in part of our scripture we read of two men sitting by the road waiting for Jesus to come by. Perhaps they had heard where he was the day before, ~~and~~ or in which direction he was traveling and so they were able to be at the right place at the right time. In

any event there they were waiting for him to come along. So when they heard the noise growing louder and the crowd around them increasing they must have inquired who it was that was coming. They probably knew but just wanted to check and make sure. After all, they did not wish to waste the opportunity to be helped by this man, and they did not want to appear foolish and cry out to the wrong person for help. So they waited, and when they heard the noise increase and could tell that the preacher was close by, they shouted, "Lord, have pity on us, Son of David." And those around them told them to shut up. Don't disturb this man he is too important for your little problem. Be quiet now so we can hear what he has to say. But they would not keep still and they shouted more loudly, "Lord! Have pity on us Son of David." And Jesus stopped, and called to them, "What do you want me to ~~do~~ do for you?" They said, "Lord, let us have our sight back." And Jesus must have looked at them in their meager condition and had pity on them. Perhaps he saw that they had difficulty in getting around, or he realized the problems they faced in life, and so he had compassion for them and touched their eyes and healed them. And we are told that immediately their sight returned and they followed him. They did not run off somewhere and forget the incident. They followed him.

This incident involves physical blindness. But consider the other portion of scripture. Here we find two of the followers walking along on the road to Emmaus. As they walk along they are talking of the events of the past few days. Along comes a stranger and they engage him in the conversation. But strangely enough, when they find he does not know all of the events of the past few days, they do not even bother to ask him why he does not know, where he came from and so on as most people would do. We would say, man where have you been the last couple of days? Where did you come from? Are you just a salesman passing through or what? But the ~~ix~~ followers of Jesus did not do

~~Insistent~~ so. Instead, they tell him the story of Jesus. Even when the stranger takes them to task for not believing in the words of the prophets, do they know that it is he.

Then when they reach the destination of the two men, the stranger makes as if to go on alone and they invite him to stay with them. And it was while they were at the table having the meal, ~~that~~ when he took the bread and said the blessing and broke it and gave it to them that they knew who he was. And we are told, "And their eyes were opened and they recognized him."

Thus ended their spiritual blindness. So we see in scripture two types of blindness being dealt with. Physical blindness and spiritual blindness. The physical blindness is something that cannot always be overcome. There are men and women today who are doomed to a life of darkness and nothing can be done about it. Of those who are blind, there are some who can have help to overcome it. But we are surrounded by millions of people who are spiritually blind and many of them do not even know it.

Some of these people are so called Christians, and alas many of them do not know the man from Galilee personally. I read with interest an article telling of two brothers ^{FROM CANADA} who came to a town in Ohio to conduct a revival meeting there. ^{AND THE PLACE} ~~is~~ Mansfield Ohio, (and I am sure that most of us have heard of it or have been there.) ^{ARE} A re-awakening has taken place ^{THERE} the likes of which have never been seen and perhaps ~~it~~ ^{BE SEEN THERE} will never ~~see~~ again.

(Illustration of town here).

Perhaps some of our aches and pains could be caused by our spiritual blindness. It is only when we get right with God that we can see clearly. John Newton after a life of degradation and sin, as a slave trader could finally come to the point where he wrote, "I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see."

John Henry Newman wrote, "Lead kindly light, Amid the encircling gloom, lead thou me on." Jesus spoke many times of seeing with unseeing eyes and hearing with unhearing ears. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XX~~
~~XX~~ Jonathon Swift the English satirist wrote, "There's none so blind as they that won't see." This is a quote my Father made to me on many different occasions.

We can readily recognize those who are physically blind, because there are symptoms that we can look for. We can note that some of them will wear sunglasses at all times of the day and night; some of them will have a seeing eye dog; some of them use a cane to get around; ~~xxxx~~ others will have a wife or husband who can see, and they will constantly hold on to their arm. Each of these things or these things in combination, are tip offs or clues to the fact that this is a physically blind person.

But what of the spiritually blind? Can we look to people and see clues or tip offs in their lives or their personalities that tell of their blindness? The answer is yes and no. Spiritual blindness is an insidious disease that is ~~sort of~~ like some sort of creeping cancer. It starts out in a small fashion and before long it is beyond check or control. It starts out as a feud between two friends and ends up in a non-speaking match for years ~~between them~~. It starts out as an incident that one of our friends relates in their dealings with a member of another race and ends up in our hating all blacks or people of yellow skin or another group.

It starts out as a dislike of something that has happened in a family and ends up as a full scale family hatred. These are the signs of spiritual blindness. These are the things that lie beneath the surface in the lives of many Christians. And these are the things that keep us from really belonging to the kingdom of God, for we ~~will~~

cannot truly follow Christ if we harbor this blindness in our lives.

Last week we celebrated not only the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, but we also celebrated the Lord's Supper. We had the opportunity to come to His table and to ask for the forgiveness of our sins. And I would like to share something with you. ^{ABOUT THAT EVENT} ~~There are~~

There are people who have questioned my feelings about the almost overflow ^{CROWD} ~~there~~ we had in each church. I have been asked if this bothered me to know that there are those who only come to church on a certain occasion. The answer to this is that I rejoice for them, that there is something in their life that compels them to come at all. I would like to see all of them in church every Sunday, but I say thank God that they feel a need in their lives at least once in a while. All Christians need our prayers and we need the prayers of all Christians.

There isn't a Sunday that goes by, that I feel adequate enough to lead this congregation in worship. But strangely enough God leads us through it and we make it with his guidance and direction.

This past week I have felt like I was about this high off the ground as a result of our worship experience last ^{SUNDAY} ~~week~~. Don't ask me why, because I can't explain it. But there is something going on in our charge that defies description. The only answer I can give is that the spirit of Christ is working in our lives to the extent that there is a transformation taking place in our very midst.

If you asked me to put my finger on it, I'd have to answer that I can't. But it amounts to what a 92 year old woman told me this past week. She said, "You know I once was afraid of death, but now I no longer fear it. My fear was taken away when I found Jesus, and that was quite a few years ago." This is what Christ can do in an individual life and this is what he can do for a church as well.

When I was a lad in Church School we sang the refrain of a hymn, many many Sundays, "Come to the light, 'tis shining for

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
 Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
 Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
153 Keck Road
Sarver, Pa. 16055
(412) 352-1103

Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.